



NATIONAL PLAYGROUND SAFETY WEEK

Spring has arrived! Children will be spending more time outside. Each year the National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS) celebrates National Playground Safety Week in April. This year National Playground Safety Week will be from April 26th through April 30th. Last year, the NPPS focused on removing potentially hazardous, heavy metal and plastic “animal” swings from playgrounds. The NPPS hopes that National Playground Safety Week will be a time for everyone to focus on safety and injury prevention on playgrounds. Visit the NPPS web site at http://www.uni.edu/playground/safety_week.html to find out more about NPPS and their goals for National Playground Safety Week.

Every year about 200,000 children are treated in hospital emergency rooms for playground related injuries. Most of these playground injuries are caused by falls. The majority of these injuries could be prevented by providing proper supervision and safer playground equipment and design.

The following web sites provide good information and resources to make parents and child care providers aware of the potential dangers that can be found on playgrounds and how to prevent injuries from occurring. Within the last five years, the Division of Child Development has implemented many of these recommendations into child care licensing requirements. In addition, child care center staff is required to complete at least four clock hours of training in safety approved by the Division (the number of staff required to complete the training is determined by the number of children the center is licensed to care for). At a minimum, this training must address playground safety hazards, playground supervision, maintenance and general upkeep of the outdoor area, and age and developmentally appropriate playground equipment. Contact the Division of

Child Development or your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency for more information regarding the required training in safety. To search for your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency click on the following web link:
http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/providers/pv_providercontacts.asp .

A playground should be created to provide a challenging and fun play environment for children but should also be reasonably safe. Parents and child care providers are encouraged to use this information to create and maintain a safe playground environment.

National Network for Child Care – *Make Playgrounds Safe*

This article references the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) which recommends that child care facilities establish basic guidelines to reduce the chance that a child will be injured. A detailed list of recommendations for playground safety guidelines is listed within this article.
http://www.nncc.org/Health/dc25_playground.safe.html

Iowa State University Extension –

Tips for Home Playground Safety

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1632.pdf>

Ten Steps to a Safer Playground

<http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Publications/SP23F.pdf>

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook for Public Playground Safety contains safety guidelines and should be considered the minimum level for playground safety. The CPSC maintains a hotline (1-800-638-2772) for reporting dangerous products and product related injuries, and for consumer information. A copy of the handbook is available on line at:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/325.pdf> .

A fact sheet is also available from CPSC which offers tips for public playground safety from the handbook.

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/Playfct.pdf>

Another fact sheet is available through CPSC which offers a home playground safety checklist – *Is Your Home Playground a Safe Place to Play?*

<http://cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/Pg1.pdf>